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## Stem Cell Agency Given National Honor for Advocacy in Scientific Research

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San Francisco, CA – The stem cell agency, the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, has been awarded the Paul G. Rogers Distinguished Organization Advocacy Award by Research!America, one of the most prestigious awards in public health.

Research!America is the nation's largest public education and advocacy group working to make health research a national priority.

"CIRM embodies the spirit of pioneers in research, setting high standards for others to follow in achieving a wonderful model of collaborative research to improve health," says Mary Woolley, President and CEO of Research!America. "We applaud their leadership and tenacious dedication to medical and health research."

Woolley praised the agency saying it has turned California into a global leader in stem cell research, creating partnerships with governments and organizations in 12 countries, one U.S. state, two international states and four foundations, leveraging the best scientific minds in the world. CIRM has also boosted the state's economy, with the first \$1.6 billion in grants generating \$286 million in new tax revenue for California.

"This is a great award and we are all truly honored to be chosen by Research!America," says Alan Trounson, PhD, President of the stem cell agency. "The research we are funding has the potential to completely transform the way we think about, and treat, disease. And this year promises to be a hugely important one for stem cell research, with a number of promising therapies moving from discovery in the lab to clinical trials."

The stem cell agency was nominated for the award by Don Reed, a patient advocate for spinal cord injury. "CIRM embodies the hopes of all who object to chronic disease, and who want to do something about it," says Reed. "CIRM is more than a shining symbol of hope—it is a working tool to turn dreams of health into reality. My son, Roman Reed, has been paralyzed for eighteen years, but I believe I will see him walk again one day. And when he does, when he stands up from that wheelchair and walks away from it forever, I will know that some of his first steps were taken on King Street, in San Francisco, at CIRM."

The annual Research!America Advocacy Awards, presented at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington, DC on March 13, honor outstanding advocates for medical, health and scientific research, recognizing individuals and organizations who have been leaders in advancing the US's commitment to research.

"In approving Proposition 71 and creating CIRM California voted in favor of advancing the cause of scientific research," says Jonathan Thomas, PhD, JD, Chairman of the stem cell agency's governing Board. "We come to work every day determined to live up to that trust, and this award shows that we are doing just that. We are proud to be able to accept it on behalf of the people of California."

**About CIRM:** CIRM was established in November 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. A list of grants and loans awarded to date may be seen here: [/grants](#).

**Research!America** is the nation's largest nonprofit public education and advocacy alliance working to make research to improve health a higher national priority. The 2013 Advocacy Awards represent Research!America's 17th year of recognizing the accomplishments of leading advocates for medical and health research. For more information, visit [www.researchamerica.org/advocacy\\_awards](http://www.researchamerica.org/advocacy_awards).

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